

MESSAGES FOR PHYSICIANS & OTHER PROVIDERS

Million Hearts™ is a public-private initiative led by CDC and CMS to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the U.S. over the next five years by focusing the nation on evidence-based **community and clinical prevention** actions. Heart disease and stroke are two of the leading causes of death in the United States, making cardiovascular disease responsible for one of every three deaths in the country. Together, heart disease and stroke are among the most widespread and costly health problems facing the nation, accounting for \$444 billion in health care expenditures and lost productivity in 2010 alone.

Million Hearts™ priorities include:

- **Empowering Americans to make healthier choices** by preventing tobacco use and limiting sodium and trans fat consumption. This can reduce the number of people who need medical treatment such as blood pressure or cholesterol medications to prevent heart attacks and strokes.
- **Improving care** for people who do need treatment by encouraging a targeted focus on the “**ABCS**”—Aspirin for people at risk, **B**lood pressure control, **C**holesterol management and **S**moking cessation – which address the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease and can help to prevent heart attacks and strokes.

Your help is vital to the success of Million Hearts™:

Physicians, other healthcare providers, and health systems are vital to prevent heart attacks and strokes.

Actions you can take include the following:

- **Focus on the “ABCS”** with your patients:
 - Prioritize control of high blood pressure and cholesterol. Help your patients follow treatment instructions and IMPROVE medication adherence.

- Ask your patients about their smoking habits and provide smoking cessation counseling and tools for smokers.
- Prescribe appropriate aspirin therapy for those who would benefit.
- **Track and improve “ABCS” performance** through health information technology and quality improvement:
 - Report on the ABCS-related Cardiovascular Prevention Measures Group in the CMS [Physician Quality Reporting System](#).
 - Use health information technology, such as electronic health records with clinical decision support tools and a patient registry, to improve the delivery of care for the ABCS in patients and populations/panels. For example, use electronic health record registry functionality regularly to detect those with uncontrolled hypertension or cholesterol and recall them for follow-up.
 - Align provider education and quality improvement initiatives to focus on and improve the ABCS.
 - Recognize and reward health care providers who address and promote the ABCS in their patients.
 - Connect with other clinicians in your community in a learning and action network aimed at improving ABCS in your patients.
- **Support team-based approaches** to care to improve coordination and quality of care for patients.
- **Implement innovative care models** (patient-centered medical homes, Accountable Care Organizations) that include a focus on the ABCS.
- **Connect at-risk patients with community resources** for self-management, diabetes education, and other community resources to address barriers to adherence.
- **Decrease health disparities** – use culturally appropriate education materials, patient navigators, community health workers to address barriers to care.
- **Educate your patients** about the most effective ways to control their risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

- **Promote heart-healthy habits** to your patients, such as regular physical activity and a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Reduce out-of-pocket costs** for smoking cessation, blood pressure and cholesterol medications and services.

In addition to improving heart disease and stroke prevention with your patients, health systems and health care providers can:

- **Drive awareness of the initiative.** Include Million Hearts™ messages in newsletters, “shared story” op-eds in intrapersonal publications, pledge your organization’s commitment on the Million Hearts™ website, and recruit at least 20 patients and partners to do the same. <http://millionhearts.hhs.gov>
- **Convene partners,** stakeholders and policy makers for Million Hearts™ events such as the February 21 Grand Rounds, broadcasted 1:00 – 2:00 PM EST. This session will be available for viewing live or archived at <http://www.cdc.gov/about/grand-rounds/> and will feature CDC Director Dr. Tom Frieden and Million Hearts™ Executive Director Dr. Janet Wright as well as key leadership from CMS and prominent partner organizations. Lead discussions following this or similar events with partners on how they can join the effort.
- **Share success stories** on the Million Hearts™ website when available.

Some of the existing investments in cardiovascular health that can be leveraged include:

- [Physician Quality Reporting System](#)
- [Community Transformation Grants](#)
- [Medicare & Medicaid Electronic Health Records Incentive Programs](#)
- [HITECH Act programs](#) (health information resources, health information exchanges, regional extension centers, Beacons)
- [Patient Centered Medical Home Initiatives](#)
- [Medicare Shared Savings Programs \(Accountable Care Organizations\)](#)

- [CMS Innovation Center Initiatives](#)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and CMS [Federally Qualified Health Center \(FQHC\) Advanced Primary Care Project and other FQHC programs](#)
- [Medicare Quality Improvement Organization \(QIO\) Program](#) initiatives, including [cardiac care learning and action networks](#) and support for provider participation in the Physician Quality Reporting System
- [Partnership for Patients](#) programs that address cardiovascular health transitions of care and patient self-management